GOAL 6: Reduction of Global and Cross-Border Environmental Risks

The United States will lead other nations in successful, multilateral efforts to reduce significant risks to human health and ecosystems from climate change, stratospheric ozone depletion, and other hazards of international concern.

Importance of Goal

Ecosystems and transboundary pollutants do not respect international boundaries. As a result, unilateral domestic actions of the U.S. are inadequate to achieve some of EPA's most important environmental goals. Reduction of global and cross-border environmental risk is important because of the significant risks to the U.S. that originate in other countries and undermine U.S. investments in environmental protection. Achieving our environmental goals requires us to work with other countries to address external sources of pollution impacting human health and the environment of our nation. Conversely, the U.S. also holds itself responsible for preventing or minimizing the impacts of transboundary pollution originating here.

EPA's continued leadership is necessary to build the international cooperation and technical capacity that are essential to prevent harm to the global environment and ecosystems that we share with other nations. A coordinated international response is needed to confront the climate change threat, depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer, transboundary circulation of toxics, and other environmental issues significant to the interests of the United States. Continued leadership by the U.S. and EPA is necessary in building the international cooperation and technical capacity needed to successfully address these issues in a manner that provides efficient and sustainable long-term solutions. Where the accomplishment of U.S. environmental goals requires the cooperation of other countries, EPA works with the Department of State, other Federal agencies, states, tribes, and non-governmental organizations to ensure that U.S. environmental interests are appropriately addressed.

Objectives

- By 2005, reduce transboundary threats to human health and shared ecosystems in North America consistent with our bilateral and multilateral treaty obligations in these areas, as well as our trust responsibility to tribes.
- By 2000 and beyond, U.S. greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced to levels consistent with international commitments agreed upon under the Framework Convention on Climate Change, building on initial efforts under the Climate Change Action Plan.
- By 2005, ozone concentrations in the stratosphere will have stopped declining and slowly begun the process of recovery.
- By 2005, reduce the risks to U.S. human health and ecosystems from selected toxics that circulate in the environment at global and regional scales consistent with international obligations.
- By 2005, the United States will prevent significant degradation of the marine and polar environments, consistent with U.S. obligations under relevant international agreements.
- By 2005, increase the application of cleaner and more cost-effective environmental practices and technologies in the U.S. and abroad through international cooperation.

What Will Be Accomplished

The principal accomplishment of EPA's international efforts will be to reduce risks to human health, the environment, and quality of life both within the U.S. and on a global level.

EPA's Climate Change program will continue efforts to achieve stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous interference with the climate system. Recognizing that no single country can resolve the problem of global climate change, EPA is engaged in many activities to facilitate international cooperation. To this end, EPA is actively participating in international research, applied analysis, assessment efforts, and efforts to develop and implement global climate change strategy, and is providing financial and technical assistance to developing countries to facilitate development of mitigation and sequestration strategies.

On the domestic side, EPA's Climate Change programs will continue to focus on minimizing the global impacts of greenhouse gas emissions originating in the U.S. Programs will promote voluntary partnerships, provide technical assistance and promote activities at the state and local levels that enhance future GHG emission reductions. The programs will help transform markets and stimulate investments in energy efficient products and technologies that reduce the need for greater electricity-generating capacity. EPA will also continue to participate in the Partnership for a New Generation of vehicles that involves a federal/domestic automobile industry partnership to develop "leapfrog" technology to triple automotive fuel economy and reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 67 percent, while maintaining vehicle performance and affordability.

To protect the earth's ozone layer, EPA will continue to implement and enforce rules controlling the production and emission of ozone-depleting compounds, and the use of alternative chemicals to curtail ozone depletion. In addition, EPA, along with other industrial countries, will continue to provide support to the efforts of developing countries to find alternatives to ozone-depleting chemicals.

To reduce risks from persistent organic pollutants and selected metals that circulate in the environment at global and regional scales, EPA is working with the Department of State and other countries to negotiate the phase-out and control of certain chemicals that continue to pose environmental risks from their use and production in other parts of the world. We are also working to reach agreement on import and export requirements applicable to certain chemicals, an expansion of pollutant release and transfer registers (PRTRs), and the harmonization of chemical testing, assessment, and labeling procedures.

To reduce environmental and human health risks along the U.S./Mexico Border, EPA is working with the border states and Mexico to meet ambient air quality standards for several air pollutants in seven areas currently failing to meet national air quality standards. In addition, EPA is working to increase water infrastructure, reduce hazardous waste disposal, and put in place chemical accident contingency plans in 10 of the 14 Sister Cities along the U.S./Mexico Border.

Working with Canada, we are moving to reduce the level of toxic substances in the Great Lakes, reduce sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions that cause acid rain, and protect shared ecosystems along our northern border. Recognizing that activities in Mexico, Canada, and the United States impact environmental conditions beyond the immediate border areas and that free trade requires compatible environmental practices, we

are also working to establish such practices across North America.

EPA will continue to take a leadership role in the development of international systems resembling the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) and will assist nations in furthering "right-to-know" legislation and public access to environmental information. EPA will also work to achieve an integrated and mutually supportive approach to international trade and environmental policies. This approach reflects the Agency's commitment to sustainable development and relies on cooperation on environmental standards with our major trading partners. International cooperation in environmental research and policy development will increase cost effectiveness of selected U.S. environmental protection programs.

To prevent significant degradation of the marine environment, EPA, working with the Department of State, NOAA, and other Federal agencies, expects to conclude a regional agreement addressing land-based marine pollution in the Wider Caribbean. The Agency is also working to raise international marine pollution standards through the International Maritime Organization and the United Nations Environment Program.

Recognizing our national interest in the Arctic as an ecosystem we share with other nations, the U.S. is also working with the Russian Federation to achieve a 25 percent reduction in the number of high-level radioactive sources in Northwest Russia with the potential for near-term release into the Arctic environment.

Key targets to be achieved in the international area include the following.

- By 2005, atmospheric concentrations of the ozone-depleting substances CFC-11 and CFC-12 will have peaked at no more than 300 and 570 parts per trillion, respectively, and with the exception of HCFCs and very limited "essential uses," no more ozone-depleting substances will be produced in the U.S.
- By 2005, help to ensure that at least 75 developing countries will have reduced their production and consumption of CFCs by 50 percent.
- By 2000, CCAP implementation throughout the Federal government will reduce annual U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 75 million metric tons of carbon equivalent (MMTCE). The programs will lead to greater annual reductions of between 115 and 140 MMTCE by 2005.
- By 2010, the air will be safer to breathe in areas along the US/Mexico border that exceed one or more of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, and all areas will attain the standards within the timeframes described in Goal 1 - Clean Air.
- By 2005, disposal rates of hazardous waste in the U.S./Mexico Border Area will be reduced by 8 percent and chemical accident contingency plans will be in place in 10 of the 14 pairs of sister cities along the Border.
- By 2000, the population in the U.S./Mexico Border Area that is served by adequate drinking water, wastewater collection and treatment systems will increase by 7 percent through the design and construction of water infrastructure .
- By 2005, formal delisting of three of the 31 U.S. toxic hot spots in the Great Lakes; reduction in the number of Great Lakes fish advisories; a plan of action to expand cooperation to reduce ground level ozone and particulate; confirmation of elimination of sources of five bioaccumulative pesticides that enter the Great Lakes Basin by 1998; reduction of 10 million tons of utility and industrial SO2 emissions from 1980 levels by 2010; utility and mobile source NOX emission reduction of two million tons from 1980 levels by 2000; a 90 percent reduction in high-level PCBs used in electrical equipment by 2006; 50 percent reductions in the deliberate uses and releases of mercury resulting from human activity.
- By 2000, complete: North American action plans on PCBs, chlordane and DDT; a protocol on persistent organic pollutants and heavy metals (through the UNECE Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution); a legally binding global convention outlining requirements for the export and import of selected chemicals (commonly referred to as Prior Informed Consent (PIC)); and by 2005, complete a global convention on selected persistent organic pollutants and develop an international network for monitoring mercury emissions.
- By 2005, increase the cost-effectiveness of selected U.S. environmental protection programs by 20 percent and complete training and information

materials for application in key countries or regions of the world.

Strategies for How It Will Be Accomplished

EPA uses a variety of approaches to achieve its international objectives, including:

- Implementing formal bilateral and multilateral environmental agreements with key countries, executing environmental components of key foreign policy initiatives, and, through the Department of State, engaging in regional and global negotiations aimed at reducing risks via formal and informal agreements.
- Cooperating with other countries to ensure that domestic and international environmental laws, policies, and priorities are recognized and implemented and, where appropriate, promoted within the multilateral development assistance and trading system.
- Cooperating with other federal agencies, states, business, and environmental groups to promote the flow of environmentally sustainable technologies and services worldwide; multilateral collaboration in coordinating environmental policies and implementing cooperative research and development programs; and international technical assistance, training, information exchange, and other capacity-building programs.
- Implementing a strategic plan on "Environmental Security" with the Department of Defense and the Department of Energy.
- Continuing domestic and international efforts to limit the production and use of ozone-depleting substances and to develop safe alternative compounds.
- Demonstrating and promoting public/private partnership programs that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Performance Measures

The global and transboundary environmental risks addressed in this goal vary in geographic scale as well as the nature of the problems being addressed in the six objectives found under the goal.

The first objective encompasses specific outcomes for our immediate border areas with Canada and Mexico. Performance measures in this area will often identify intermediate steps in our cooperative efforts with Canada and Mexico in meeting environmental outcomes that must be achieved over several years. Examples include water infrastructure completed in the U.S./Mexico Border Area, establishment of air emission inventories, and degree of program completion.

Objectives two, three, four, and five outline U.S. objectives for protection of the global commons as well as U.S. interests in reducing the risks associated with toxics that circulate in the environment at global and regional scales. Relevant performance measures will include changes in concentrations of the appropriate stressors. Performance measures relating to our efforts to prevent degradation of the marine environment and the reduction of transboundary toxics focus largely on sequential progress to be made in specific multilateral negotiations.

Objective six covers a broad range of technical cooperation and environmental policy programs supporting environmental security interests of the United States as well as improved efficiency in our domestic programs. Specific performance measures will include indicators of improved environmental management in key countries, improvements in U.S. environmental programs derived from foreign programs, and successes in sustaining positive environmental gains in the expanding trade and environment agenda.